



CITY OF LODI

FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIRE PREVENTION STANDARD



HAUNTED HOUSES

Number: F-01	Effective Date: 09/24/03	Revised Date:
Code References: 2001 California Building Code, 2001 California Fire Code, and California Code of Regulations, Title 19.		
Note: This standard is a summary of Fire department clarifications of City and State Codes. Information contained herein applies to typical circumstances and may not address all situations.		

SCOPE

These guidelines shall apply to temporary Haunted Houses, Ghost Walks, or similar operations, open to the public, where combustible decorative material and confusing sounds and/or visual effects are present. Guidelines are based on the minimum standards of state codes and local ordinances.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of the guidelines, certain terms and words are defined as follows:

Haunted House: A temporary or permanent building or structure, or portion thereof, which contains a system that transports passengers or provides a walkway through a course so arranged that the means of egress are not apparent due to theatrical distractions, not visible due to low illumination, are disguised or are not readily available due to the method of transportation through the building or structure.

Ghost Walks: Similar to Haunted House and may include both indoor and outdoor areas where egress to a public way is similarly not readily identifiable.

PERMITS

1. A permit application shall be submitted to the City of Lodi Fire Department a minimum of (2) two weeks prior to the event. An inspection shall be required for final approval.
2. Additional permits may be required. Contact the City of Lodi Community Development Department for details.
3. Permit application packets should include the following:
 - A. Dimensional site plan shall indicate proximity of event building to other structures or hazardous areas, and path of travel from event building or area to the public way

B. Floor plan showing the following:

1. Dimension (total square footage, width of exits, aisles or interior exit pathways, etc.)
2. Location of exits, exits signs, and emergency lighting units.
3. Location of fire extinguishers.
4. Location of electrical panel(s) and lights switches.
5. Location of smoke detectors and/or fire alarm panel.
6. Normal use of any structure(s) (i.e.: auditorium, school, church, etc.
7. Staff positions

C. Written emergency procedure(see “Emergency Planning” section below)

REQUIREMENTS

1. Emergency Planning:

- A) Maximum occupancy load (which shall include staff) shall be determined during plan review. A sign stating maximum occupant capacity shall be posted in a visible location near the entrance, and staff shall control the flow of patrons so as not to exceed this limit.
- B) A written emergency procedure plan shall be provided with permit application packet. All employees shall be trained in emergency procedures.
- C) Emergency procedure plan shall include training of staff and familiarization with fire alarm tone. Specific personnel shall be designated to turn off all distracting noises (i.e.: sound system) and turn on lights when alerted by either fire alarm system or otherwise notified of an emergency condition.
- D) This event shall be adequately staffed to control the occupant load and assist patrons in exiting would an evacuation become necessary. Staffing level shall be determined upon review of plans and may be increased at the discretion of the inspector.
- E) All emergency staff shall carry flashlights and know the location of all exits, fire extinguishers, light switches, electrical panels, and emergency phones.
- F) A fire drill may be required.
- G) Phone communications shall be readily available for the purpose of calling 911 in the event of any emergency.

2. Exits:

- A) Two exits shall be provided from each room with an occupant load of 50 or more
Required exit doors shall swing in the direction of egress.

- B) Illuminated exit signs, with battery backup, shall be provided at each exit serving an occupant load of 50 or more. Non-illuminated exit signs shall be provided for all exits serving an occupant load less than 50.
- C) Exit doors serving an occupant load of 50 or more shall not be provided with a latch or lock unless it is panic hardware.
- D) Emergency lighting, with battery back up shall be provided in all rooms, areas and exit pathways when serving an occupant load of 50 or more.
- E) Exhibits and decorative materials shall not obstruct, confuse, or obscure exits, exit pathways, exit signs, or emergency lighting units.
- F) An additional pathway marking, including low-level marking and signs, may be required at time of field inspection.

3. Fire Protection:

- A) Provide an approved automatic fire sprinkler system.
Exception: When the total floor area is less than 1000 square feet and the travel distance to an exit is less than 50 feet.
- B) Provide an approved automatic smoke detection system in accordance with California Building Code as required for amusement building.
Exception: When the total floor area is less than 1000 square feet and the travel distance to an exit is less than 50 feet, battery operated, stand alone, listed smoke detectors installed in all areas may be used to meet this requirement when approved by the Fire Department.
- C) Provide a public address system in accordance with the California Building Code as required for amusement building.
Exception: When the total floor area is less than 1000 square feet and the travel distance to an exit is less than 50 feet, manually activated device(s) suitable for sounding an alarm, or other approved method of alerting staff, shall be provided as approved by the Fire Department. The alarm shall be distinctive in tone and audible throughout the haunted house/area.
- D) Fire extinguishers shall be:
 - 1. Minimum 2A10BC rated.
 - 2. Properly mounted (top of unit between 3 and 5 feet from the floor)
 - 3. Visible and accessible at all times and clearly illuminated or marked with reflective tape.
 - 4. Located within 50 feet of travel distance from anywhere in the building.
- E) Decorative material shall not obstruct fire sprinklers, fire extinguishers, or any other fire protection equipment.

4. Electrical:

- A) Extension cords shall be of heavy commercial type, UL listed, in good condition and shall be appropriated for its use.
- B) Only UL listed power strips with over-current protection shall be used when the number of outlets provided is inadequate. Power strips shall be plugged directly into provided outlets, and shall not be plugged into one another in a series.
- C) All extension cords and power strips shall be adequately protected from foot traffic (Bridged) if path of travel cannot be avoided.
- D) An electrical permit may be required. See your local Building Department requirements.
- E) Flood and strobe lights shall be plugged directly into a wall outlet a listed multi-plug power strip, or a single listed heavy extension cord. For string lighting, reference the manufacturer's installation guidelines for the maximum number of string lights that may be connected. When plugging the string lights together, the total amperage of all the lights strings shall be calculated to ensure that they do not exceed the amperage of the extension cord and circuit.

5. Decorative Materials

- A) All decorative materials (decorations, drapes, backdrops and props) shall be both inherently flame retardant and labeled as such, or shall be treated with a flame retardant that is registered with the California State Fire Marshal. Any material not appropriately labeled as fire retardant shall be flame tested.
NOTE: The flame test shall consist of putting a flame to a sample of the material by a match or lighter. The test shall be conducted outside the building on a specimen of the material approximately 3 inches wide by 10 inches long and oriented at a 45-degree angle. When testing, the flame shall be applied at the bottom edge of the material for a period of up to 12 seconds. If the material fails to ignite, or it ignites and self extinguishes when the flames source is removed. The material shall be considered flame retardant.

6. Miscellaneous:

- A) Care and consideration shall be used with respect to smoke generator and smoke detector locations. Use of smoke generator may be restricted if determined to be incompatible with smoke detectors(s).
- B) "NO SMOKING" signs shall be provided at entrances and throughout exhibit.
- C) Storage or use of flammable or combustible liquids, gasses and solids is prohibited.
- D) Open flame is prohibited.
- E) Good housekeeping shall be maintained throughout exhibit and exit pathways.